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ABSTRACT

Training procedures used with foreign language interms in the Stanford Secondary Teacher Education Program during the summer of 1970 are described in this memorandum. Principal departures from the more traditional microteaching procedures allow students to work in more realistic and natural settings while practice-teaching and permit replacement of the teacher-centered microlesson with a more student-centered teaching experience. Criticism of early microteaching models precedes an explication of the Stanford Program. (RL)

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STANFORD CENTER
FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
IN TEACHING

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THE COOPERATIVE SUMMER SCHOOL: A MODIFICATION OF THE MICROTEACHING APPROACH TO TEACHER TRAINING

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Introductory Statement

The Center is concerned with the shortcomings of teaching in American schools: the ineffectiveness of many American teachers in promoting achievement of higher cognitive objectives, in engaging their students in the tasks of school learning, and, especially, in serving the needs of students from low-income areas. Of equal concern is the inadequacy of American schools as environments fostering the teachers' own motivations, skills, and professionalism.

The Center employs the resources of the behavioral sciences--theoretical and methodological--in seeking and applying knowledge basic to the achievement of its objectives. Analysis of the Center's problem area has resulted in three programs: Teaching Effectiveness, Teaching Students from Low-Income Areas, and the Environment for Teaching. Drawing primarily upon psychology and sociology, and also upon economics and political science, the Center has formulated integrated programs of research, development, demonstration, and dissemination in these three areas. In the program on Teaching Effectiveness, the strategy is to develop a Model Teacher Training System integrating components that dependably enhance teaching skill. In the program on Teaching Students from Low-Income Areas, the strategy is to develop materials and procedures for engaging and motivating such students and their teachers. In the program on Environment for Teaching, the strategy is to develop patterns of school organization and teacher evaluation that will help teachers function more professionally, at higher levels of morale and commitment.

This report describes a modification of the microteaching approach to teacher training applied to the teaching of foreign languages.

Acknowledgments

None of what is reported here would have been possible without the enthusiastic cooperation of members of the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) staff and administration:

Mr. Ray Ruppel, Director of the Summer Session, and his staff, who smoothed the way for recruiting summer school students up to the last moment.

Mr. Wallace Porter, Summer School Dean, who threw open the facilities of Terman Junior High School and provided classroom space and work space.

Mr. Howard Hoyt, Summer School Coordinator for the PAUSD, who worked indefatigably and cheerfully at a variety of tasks ranging from supervision and demonstration-teaching to counseling interns and students.

Mrs. Gwen Weisner, Secretary and Laboratory Assistant, who maintained records of attendance and organized the reassignment of students to groups, who kept the lines of communication open, and who single-handedly staffed the language laboratory.

The PAUSD Curriculum Associates and teachers who cooperated fully in recruiting students for the summer program.

And finally, the junior high school students themselves, who provided an exciting and profitable experience for the Stanford teaching interns.

Foreword

This R&D Memorandum describes the training procedures used with foreign language interns in the Stanford Secondary Teacher Education Program during the summer of 1970. The most important innovation in the training program was the use of continuous microclasses. The students were volunteers who had specific objectives concerning their foreign language skills. The curriculum was fitted as closely as possible to their needs.

The traditional microteaching procedure utilizes the teaching of short lessons, each of which emphasizes a specific teaching skill. In foreign language teaching, however, disjointed microlessons had previously proved unrealistic, primarily because the students assembled for a specific microlesson typically had either no experience or highly divergent experiences in the language being taught. In the continuous microclass procedure outlined in this memorandum, the advantage of concentrating each lesson on a specific skill is lost to some extent, but a major advantage is gained by (a) having a more realistic and natural setting for practice teaching and (b) replacing the teacher-centered microlesson with a more student-centered teaching experience.

R. L. Politzer

THE COOPERATIVE SUMMER SCHOOL: A MODIFICATION OF THE MICROTEACHING APPROACH TO TEACHER TRAINING

Louis Weiss

Educational institutions around the country are adopting the microteaching clinic as an integral part of their teacher-training programs. At Stanford University where the procedure was conceived and developed, the Heuristic Teaching Program (now the program on Teaching Effectiveness) of the Center for Research and Development in Teaching has been exploring more sophisticated approaches to microteaching. This memorandum describes one such approach based on cooperation between a local school system and a teacher-training institution.

One early model for microteaching used a teach/reteach paradigm that focused on specific technical skills. Under this model the intern[1] teaches a five-minute lesson, using one of the technical skills, to a group of four or five paid students of high school age. The five-minute lesson is videotaped for immediate observation and evaluation by the intern and his supervisor. After a ten-minute supervisory conference the intern revises the lesson he has just taught and prepares to reteach it to a new group of students. This revision is expected to be accomplished in the fifteen minutes during which a second intern teaches a five-minute lesson and confers with his supervisor for ten minutes. At the end of the fifteen minutes, the first intern teaches the revised lesson, his teaching is videotaped, and his performance is again evaluated by the supervisor.

Louis Weiss is now Foreign Language Curriculum Associate at Terman Junior High School, Palo Alto (California) Unified School District. The activity described herein was carried on while he was serving as Acting Instructor for Language Curriculum and Instruction in the Stanford University School of Education.

[1]Fifth-year students in the Stanford Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) are called interns.

Shortcomings of the Original Microteaching Model

Although the model described above permits the intern to concentrate on developing a repertoire of technical teaching skills, it falls short on several important aspects of teacher training. First, the model concentrates exclusively on teacher techniques and behaviors, without regard for the effects these techniques might have on the students. At all times, the camera and the attention of the supervisor are focused on the teacher. The students, who learn very quickly what is expected of them, are in effect paid actors; they are even at times coached to react in certain ways. Second, although the model permits the setting of very short-term goals, it does not prepare the intern for the important task of setting long-range objectives and devising strategies to attain them. This task is meant to be accomplished in the process of his internship in the classroom and is meant to be based on principles learned during the summer. Finally, the intern is rarely, if ever, given the opportunity to teach for any extended period of time to a normal-sized class.

These shortcomings of the microteaching model are especially evident in the training of foreign language teachers. Since the students used have either no experience in foreign languages or experience so divergent as to render it useless, the intern and the students are obliged to pretend that they are starting from the beginning and that their objectives are somehow realistic and important. The microteaching lessons cannot go beyond the very elementary stages of language learning. Even in the rare instances when students are selected specifically for their language background and are grouped according to language and level of ability, the artificiality of the five-minute lesson taught to paid students is evident to all concerned.

Thus, after a summer of microteaching, the intern goes into the classroom with no practical experience in teaching beyond the most elementary stages. In addition, those technical skills which may have seemed effective with four or five paid students do not necessarily work with large groups of unpaid and, in many cases, unmotivated students. A more realistic approach to the foreign language intern's summer training would utilize a reasonably large pool of secondary school students at various levels of

proficiency in the languages to be taught. With specific needs and goals, either for enrichment or for remedial work, these students would provide the interns the opportunity to identify and attack a wide variety of instructional problems. And continuous contact with the students would provide a more practical, realistic introduction to full-scale teaching.

The Stanford Intern Training Program, Summer 1970

During the summer of 1970, an arrangement made by Stanford University with the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) made possible the trial of a summer intern training program designed as an alternative to the microteaching clinic. This arrangement provided an opportunity for the Stanford teaching interns to work with students enrolled in the PAUSD. Instead of teaching short lessons to small groups of paid students, interns would be able to spend at least 40 contact hours teaching varied groups of regular students with a wide range in background, ability, needs, and goals. At the same time, the students would receive instruction more closely fitted to their needs as they worked in small groups rather than in large, heterogeneous classes.

Recruitment of Students

In general, summer school programs in foreign languages have been directed toward remedial work rather than enrichment, so motivation and enrollment tend to be low. Three weeks before the beginning of summer school, the PAUSD reported only 17 students enrolled in Spanish, five in French, and none in German. Since there were 14 interns (seven in Spanish, five in French, and two in German) more students were needed. Curriculum Associates and teachers in all three of the PAUSD junior high schools were asked to encourage any of their students who were interested in enrichment and in small group work to enroll in summer school. A total of 88 students enrolled. Some of them dropped out before teaching began, and, in all, 54 students participated in the program, 22 in Spanish, 22 in French, and 10 in German.

Building Arrangements and Staffing

Classes were conducted from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Terman Junior High School in Palo Alto. The Stanford STEP program employed a secretary (a former foreign language teacher) who was familiar with all three languages taught as well as with the operation of the Terman language laboratory. She, together with the PAUSD summer school foreign language teacher, kept records of attendance, grouped and regrouped the students, and made room assignments. The PAUSD teacher, in addition to sharing these duties, acted as coordinator and as resident supervisor to the interns.

The interns were supervised by two Stanford supervisors and by the Stanford Curriculum and Instruction (C & I) instructor. These three staff members met with the interns after each day's teaching to discuss problems, strategies, and techniques directly related to the ongoing work.

Diagnostic Testing and Grouping

Since the Stanford summer session did not begin until one week after the start of the PAUSD summer session, the interns were not available to teach until the second week of the session. The first week was therefore used by the Stanford C & I instructor, the PAUSD language teacher, and the secretary for diagnostic testing and for assigning students to groups.

With the cooperation of the Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, full sets of both the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery and the Pimsleur Language Proficiency tests in all three languages were purchased. Scores on the Language Aptitude Battery (LAB) indicated that the summer school students were well above average in language aptitude (see Table 1). In a previous experiment using the Pimsleur LAB as a covariant, a total mean of 49.75 was obtained for approximately 320 students in the PAUSD. The means obtained for the students enrolled in the 1970 summer session were 58.95 for Spanish, 62.09 for French, and 65.70 for German. Students were assigned to groups on the basis of their scores on the Pimsleur tests and specific information given by students themselves.

TABLE 1

Means and Standard Deviations on Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery

		Vocabulary (24)	Language Analysis (15)	Sound Discrimination (30)	Sound Symbol (24)	Total (93)
German (N=10)	Mean	13.90	11.30	20.20	20.30	65.70
	SD	3.5	2.4	3.2	1.7	7.2
French (N=22)	Mean	13.50	8.64	20.09	19.86	62.09
	SD	5.0	3.7	5.4	3.3	12.9
Spanish (N=22)	Mean	12.27	8.64	19.86	18.18	58.95
	SD	4.8	4.0	5.5	3.1	13.2

All students were asked to complete a Pupil Information Sheet concerning their prior experience, their needs, and their projected goals for the summer (see Exhibit 1, p. 10).

Experience. About 50 percent of all students in all three languages had completed one year of study; the other 50 percent had completed two and in some cases three years. Two students, one in a French group and one in a Spanish group, had had no experience. These students worked part of the time with slower groups and part of the time in individual tutorial sessions.

Needs. On the Pupil Information Sheet, each student was asked to name the textbook he expected to be using the following year and to state the number of units he expected to cover during the summer. In Spanish, some expected to use A-LM (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) and some the Encyclopaedia Britannica series; in French there was a similar division between A-LM and VIF (Voix et Images de France, distributed by Chilton Book Company); in German, all students expected to use A-LM. Students were thus grouped according to level of experience, Pimsleur test scores, and textbook needs.

Ability. Teachers found it necessary to assign some students to lower ability groups than their previous experience or statements of future needs had indicated. In French, one group of 12 students was given review and remedial work by a team of two interns. A second group of eight inter-

mediate French students was established for intensive work on new material along with review and enrichment of old material. The advanced French students were assigned to two groups of four students each, one group working with A-LM and the other with the VIF text. With certain modifications, the same type of grouping was done for the Spanish students. In German, the two interns worked with the class as a unit part of the time and with separate groups the rest of the time.

Instructional Procedure

On the seventh day of the PAUSD summer session, all interns reported to the summer school campus for their first meeting with the students. To introduce the interns to a few basic foreign language teaching techniques and to give them an opportunity to observe the students actively engaged in a foreign language class, the first hour was devoted to demonstration teaching by the Stanford C & I instructor (in French) and the PAUSD instructor (in Spanish). After the demonstrations, the interns met with their groups and spent the remainder of the morning getting acquainted with the students. Formal instruction began the following day and continued through the last week of the PAUSD summer session. In all, there were 22 days of instruction for two hours a day, a total of 44 contact hours.

The French and Spanish interns were assigned to work with various groups on a rotating basis and were given the opportunity to work with beginning, intermediate, and advanced students who had specific, realistic goals. Twice during the summer all students in each language were consolidated in one large class. This gave the interns the opportunity to prepare and teach lessons to a large group of students at varied levels of ability. In addition, interns were encouraged to meet with individual students on a tutorial basis after the regular classes. In all the language classes, teachers had the opportunity to work together, observe each other's work, and discuss freely the problems, failures, and successes of the summer session classes.

During the small group sessions, interns were observed and supervised by the Stanford staff and by fellow interns, and videotapes were made of some sessions. Videotapes taken during a lesson on a particular day were

observed and discussed by the interns on the same day. During the four and a half weeks of teaching, the C & I instructor and the Stanford supervisors met twice weekly with the interns for one hour's discussion of techniques, problems, and general observations. Although the interns were encouraged and even urged to prepare their lessons in ten- or fifteen-minute modules and to experiment as much as possible with flexibility, they tended to fall into a pattern of teaching two 50-minute lessons with a ten-minute recess. Only toward the end of the summer were the interns confident enough or daring enough to experiment with the instructional procedures.

Post-session Curriculum and Instruction Classes

During the final three weeks of the Stanford summer session (after the conclusion of the PAUSD summer session) all interns met for two hours three mornings a week for a course in Curriculum and Instruction. The course exposed the interns to the history of foreign language teaching, to various methods of teaching foreign languages in the secondary schools, and to the theoretical bases underlying these methods.

The interns were required to keep progress reports on the students in their charge. These reports, with the addition of commentaries based on reading and classroom discussion during the final three weeks of the C & I course, constituted the written requirement for the summer course work. Copies of reports on individual PAUSD students were made available to their foreign language teachers for the following year.

Evaluation of the Program

On the whole, the 1970 Intern Training Program for foreign languages was successful both as a training program for Stanford STEP interns and as a learning experience for the PAUSD foreign language students. In the short space of five weeks, the students were exposed to over 40 hours of concentrated foreign language study, working in small groups with instructional strategies geared specifically to their individual needs. The STEP interns were exposed to the same number of hours of concentrated teaching, to the opportunity of working with genuine students in a sequen-

tial program of study, and to the opportunity to observe and evaluate the short-term results of their efforts.

Although all the goals were not met for all students, the possibilities for individualization of instruction for teachers and students justify the continuation of such a program. Certain changes, however, should be considered for improvement of the program.

The first step would be to arrange the schedule so as to allow a full week of orientation, instruction, and practice for the interns before they meet their summer students. One of the major weaknesses of the 1970 Stanford program was the necessity for the interns to meet their students before they, the interns, were technically or psychologically prepared.

The second step would be to foster a closer link between the regular teachers of the students coming to the summer classes and the interns. One must seriously question the value of results obtained from standardized tests given to students in the atmosphere of confusion and tension that generally accompanies the first days of summer school. An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of a student by his most recent teacher would be more useful to the intern and more relevant to the summer program to be designed for the student. It may not be possible for all interns and teachers to meet personally, but a well-designed questionnaire completed before the end of the school year would be a reasonable substitute.

Third, to maintain ties with the school district from which the summer students are drawn, a report of the progress and achievement of each student might be sent to his former as well as future foreign language teacher at the end of the summer. This procedure could establish a rapport over the years that would be profitable for all concerned.

Finally, more consideration should be given to the scheduling of the courses required of interns in the summer. For instance, the academic courses might be scheduled for afternoons so that the mornings could be free for teaching and for the C & I course. Ideally, the C & I course should be given for an hour immediately following the interns' teaching period. These sessions would be devoted to discussing the practical problems that arose during the morning's teaching and to discussing and demon-

strating selected teaching techniques and stratagems for meeting these specific problems. The final weeks of the C & I course could then be devoted to theoretical and historical aspects of language teaching and to an evaluation of the summer experience.

Language

EXHIBIT 1

Pupil Information Sheet
Foreign Language
Terman Summer School - 1970

1. My name is_____.

2. During the past year I have been in the _____ grade at

_____.
Name of school

3. My last class in the language I will study this summer was called

_____* and we used a book
Name and number of class

called _____.
Name of textbook

4. In the fall I hope to be qualified for the class called

_____ at _____.
Name and number of class Name of school

5. My reasons for signing up for foreign language in summer school are as follows: (Include your specific goals. Ask your teacher for help if necessary. Refer to particular skills needed and/or certain chapters of particular books to be covered.)

*If you were not in this class at the end of the spring semester of this year, please tell when you last studied the language and why you have not been enrolled since then.

_____

_____

_____

EXHIBIT 2

Palo Alto Unified School District

Lewis M. Terman Junior High School • 655 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, California 94306 • 327-7100

June 10, 1970

Dear Parent:

This year, the Foreign Language Summer School Program will be conducted in cooperation with Stanford University's Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) and will offer your son or daughter a new and, we believe, interesting program. The teachers participating in the Stanford pre-service training program have been carefully selected from a large pool of applicants for their proficiency in the language which they will be teaching, their contact with the culture of that language and their interest in students and in the teaching profession.

Since Stanford will provide 14 such intern teachers and three supervisors, it will be possible for students to work in very small groups and even on a tutorial basis. Assignment to groups will be made on the basis of previous language study and on individual needs and objectives. The intern teachers will work with their supervisors and the Palo Alto Teaching Staff to determine the most effective instructional strategies, to implement these strategies and evaluate their work with one or more teachers in small groups, to practice comprehension and pronunciation in the language laboratory under the direction of a full-time laboratory assistant and to work individually on written assignments where appropriate. We are confident that the flexibility of the daily schedule and the opportunity for individual work will be both profitable and interesting to the students.

The first week of school (June 15 to 19) will be devoted to pretesting and analysis of individual student's needs and assignment to specific language groups. The intensive instruction will begin the second week and continue until the end of the summer session (July 24). If you have any questions concerning the summer school program, please call Mr. Weiss or Mr. Porter at 327-7100, Extension 6653.

Sincerely yours,

Wallace M. Porter

Wallace Porter
Summer School Dean